

The Second Coming Literary Devices

Writer: William Butler Yeats | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Figures of Speech

- **Metaphor:** The poem says, "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold." Here, "centre" means order and control. It is not a real centre, but a metaphor for stability in life. So, this line shows how everything is breaking down.
- **Personification:** The poem describes a "rough beast" that "slouches towards Bethlehem to be born." The beast is given human qualities like walking and slouching. This gives the idea of an evil force coming alive and moving forward.
- **Imagery:** Yeats uses strong images like "widening gyre" and "blood-dimmed tide." These help us see chaos and violence in the world. The picture of a "beast" rising creates fear and darkness in our minds.
- **Symbols:**
 - **The Gyre:** The "gyre" is a spinning spiral. It shows history moving in cycles. The world is turning and changing, but the old order is ending.
 - **The Rough Beast:** This beast is a symbol of a new, wild power coming into the world. It is scary and unknown. It may bring destruction or a new era.
 - **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem is the place where Jesus was born. Here, it shows that a new birth is coming—but not a good one. It is an ironic symbol of a dark future.
 - **The Falcon and the Falconer:** The falcon flying far from the falconer shows loss of control. It means people have lost their way, and order is breaking down.

Main Message:

- The old world is breaking.
- A new, uncertain age is coming.